

Explanation of caregivers distress from the cognitive model: the role of dysfunctional thoughts (pp. 115-128)

Andrés Losada¹, Ignacio Montorio², Bob G. Knight³, María Márquez², and María Izal²

¹*Rey Juan Carlos University of Madrid (Spain);* ²*Autonoma University of Madrid (Spain);*

³*University of Southern California (USA)*

The study of the construct of dysfunctional thoughts has a long tradition in cognitive behavioural theories of emotional distress. However, the number of studies that have analyzed the influence of the caregivers' dysfunctional thoughts on the caregiving stress process is rather sparse. The general literature on cognitive behavior theory and therapy suggest that the negative automatic thoughts maintained by the caregivers about caregiving would be associated with depression and other negative emotional outcomes. This work presents a review of the studies that have analyzed the caregivers' dysfunctional thoughts or attitudes. Furthermore, an adaptation of the cognitive model to the caregiving situation is suggested. In accordance with this model, there are two possible pathways through which caregivers thoughts on caregiving may affect caregiving consequences: a healthy one, involving adaptive or realistic thoughts; and a pathological one, in which dysfunctional thoughts play a central role. The implications of these considerations for interventions are discussed.